

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:5247
ANSWERED ON:30.04.2008
HEPATITIS B DISEASE
Reddy Shri Karunakara G.

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether adequate facilities/ infrastructure exist for treatment of Hepatitis-B;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and if not the reasons therefor; and
- (c) the steps taken by the Government for providing priority treatment to the people suffering from Hepatitis-B?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE(DR. ANBUMANI RAMADOSS)

(a) to (c) Hepatitis-B is caused by infection with Hepatitis-B virus (HBV).HBV can cause acute disease with symptoms like yellowing of skin and eyes, dark urine, extreme fatigue, nausea, vomiting and abdominal pain.However,the chronic cases of Hepatitis-B develop into cirrhosis of the liver or liver cancer, which is almost fatal.

While the general health care delivery system in the country is well equipped to handle various diseases including Hepatitis-B, the disease is effectively tackled through preventive measures including vaccination.The Government has launched a pilot project of immunization of Hepatitis-B free of cost for children below one year only.Hepatitis-B vaccination has commenced and has been continuing since 2003-04.Vaccine for Hepatitis-B is available in the country at affordable price.

Besides, following measures have been taken to prevent infection of Hepatitis-B:

- i) Central Government hospitals personnel at high risk are being immunized against Hepatitis-B. State Governments have also been advised to take similar steps.
- ii) Since Hepatitis-B spreads through unsafe sex and unsafe blood transfusion, guidelines have been issued for mandatory blood testing in blood banks.Promotion of safe sex is also advocated under National AIDS Control Programme.
- iii) Health awareness campaigns regarding dangers of using non-sterile syringes and needles are also held.Guidelines have also been issued to State Health authorities for use of separate sterile syringes and needles for each injection.